

The Incarnation Mystery: Statement, Provocation and Invitation

The editor has accepted the writer's proposal to invite considered responses from Rays readers to a central Christian mystery—the Incarnation. After perusing this article, we invite readers to offer what their intuition, clairvoyant investigation, contemplation, and “hard” thinking tell them about this Mystery. Knowledge of the Rosicrucian teachings on the subject is assumed. Contributions, selected at the editor's discretion, will be reprinted in forthcoming issues of the Rays. Please limit your submission (typewritten and double-spaced) to five hundred words or less.

AS STUDENTS of Rosicrucian philosophy we are automatically students of what Max Heindel refers to as the Mercurial Mysteries, named after the Lords of Mercury who founded the Mysteries for the leaders of our laggard humanity on earth. The Rosicrucian Order is one of the schools of the lesser Mercurial Mysteries. We all desire entrance into that school, but are we willing to pay the tuition? Part of that tuition is proven dedication to a life of loving, self-forgetting service. Another part is addressing the Mysteries themselves.

TWO TEMPERAMENTS

Mysteries are about divine truths. Mysteries are about key and pivotal issues in our evolutionary creation and our part in it. The Mysteries used to be celebrated in mythic dramas involving the divine truths and issues. Mysteries are often stated in questions—anything from riddles to profound and ponderous questions about the meaning of life and existence. *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* appears to answer some of the questions of the mysteries:

What are we as humans? How did we get this way? Why are we here? Where are we going? and all of those Whys? that bug us like gadflies.

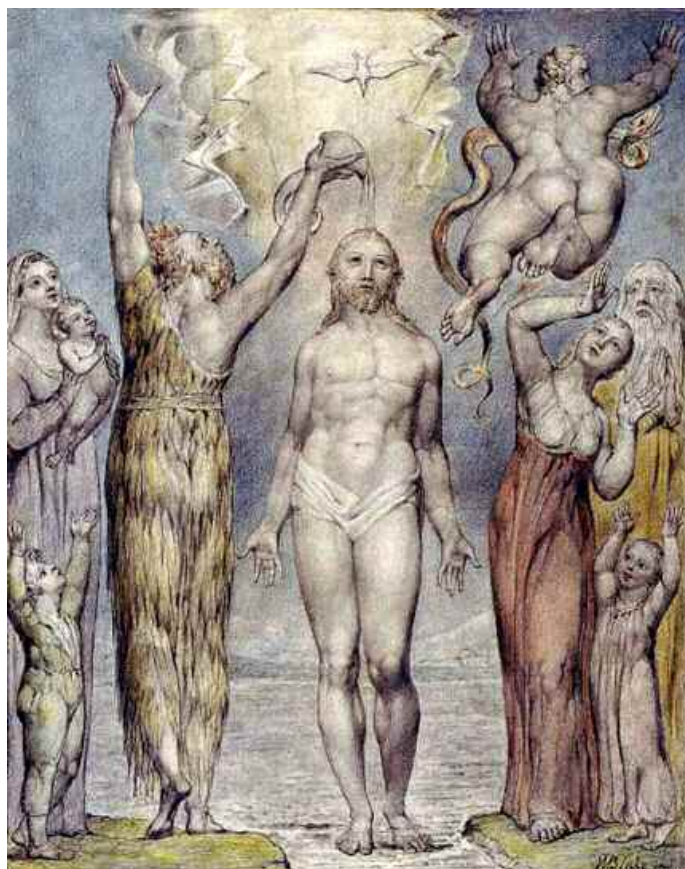
Different kinds of people relate to the Mysteries in different ways. Mr. Heindel tells us that at the time when there was a complementary division in the mode we use to express ourselves physically that allowed us to procreate and evolve creativity (which is referred to in mystical shorthand as the “separation of the sexes”), there was also a complementary division in temperament. The two primary and complementary temperaments are biblically symbolized as issuing from the surviving sons of Eve: Cain and Seth. The descendants of Seth—sometimes called the Children of Water, or (affectionately) Waterlings—have what is called a catholic temperament. That temperament approaches life by faith, by devotion, by feeling, by authority. The descendants of Cain—sometimes called Children of Fire, or Fierlings—have what is called a freemasonic temperament. They approach life by works, by knowledge, by intellect, by individual creative accomplishment. These two temperaments are complementary, but in our sufficiently perverted fallen humanity they have become antithetical and antagonistic. The difference in temperament is more important than the gender dichotomy because it is permanent, while one can change gender from rebirth to rebirth and thereby maintain balanced and complete physical experience.

Each of the two temperaments approaches the Mysteries that are meant for human redemption with a different attitude. The Children of Water approach them with an attitude of awe and rever-

ence. They bow before the Mysteries and almost worship them. They feel that if they are faithful enough and believe with all their being, the Mysteries will be revealed to them. The Children of Fire see the Mysteries as something to be solved, with practical application if possible. Presented with a Mystery, the Fierling burns inside with interest and applies himself/herself to the issue until exhausted or the problem is solved. However, solution is not merely intellectual, it is vital. Until we can live out the solution and become the truth involved in the Mystery, it has not been solved. The mythic Mystery dramas were meant to aid initiation into a Mystery by helping one to live through the issue of that Mystery in dramatic experience. This is why *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* only “appears” to answer the questions of the Mysteries. Those questions will not really be answered until we can live through those verbal answers with deliberate, waking self-consciousness. Until then those answers are not much better than idols—idolatry is not the sole property of the Waterlings.

In the Rosicrucian philosophy according to Max Heindel, we are told that one of the several missions of Christ is to provide an ideal that is appealing to both the fiery and watery temperaments—an ideal to which both can aspire with full ardor so that each can be redeemed and merged into a common spiritual unity, instead of proceeding along parallel lines of development that never meet and merge. Also according to Rosicrucian Christian mysticism the advent of Christ means more than just a new religion and a new religious Teacher. It means a new order of religion, the religion of the Son and of the Life Spirit, rather than of the Holy Ghost and of the Human Spirit. The religions of the Holy Ghost are separative, intended to meet the needs of individuals undergoing a series of specialized rebirths to learn specific lessons from specific points of view, because their evolutionary capacity is limited and can only learn small, specialized lessons. As evolving humanity outgrows the need for racial, cultural, and religious limitations, we have become ready for the totality of white light and not just one segment of the spectrum at a time.

Since the time of the three-year ministry of



Watercolor, William Blake, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, England

The Baptism of Christ

While orthodox Christians regard the Baptism of Jesus as his sanctification by the Holy Spirit, Rosicrucian Christianity teaches that the sublime Spirit of the Archangelic Christ, Regent of the Sun, entered Jesus' dense and vital bodies.

Christ-Jesus, many of the methods of the old Mystery Schools have become archaic and have fallen by the wayside, while others have been evolved and transformed to meet new needs aiming toward the unity of spiritual light in the Life Spirit—they have become christified. Beyond that, the advent of the unified higher order of religion also necessitated the introduction of a new order of Mysteries, the Christian (not in the sectarian sense of the word) Mysteries. The symbols of the Christian Mysteries are frequently found in the Gospels, which are formulae of initiation, and are directly elucidated in works like *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*. It is from these sources that we seek to better understand one of those Mysteries, the Incarnation—a mystery whose resolution has been bothering this writer like a gadfly for years.

In chapter fifteen of *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* we are told that Christ is “the Son,” the

“highest Initiate” of the Sun Period and the highest Initiate of our current Archangels. We are told that Christ, the Son, is the living focus of the second attribute of the Godhead, who functions fully in and is the representative focus of the Life Spirit. We are told that, because of lack of evolutionary experience, Christ could not build a vital body or a dense physical body; and because it would have taken way too long to gain such experience, Christ had to use a dense and vital body from a human of our life wave on our earth to incarnate into the chemical and etheric subdivisions of the physical world to offer redemption for what was lost in the “fall.” The incarnation into the dense and vital bodies is described on page 381 of *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*:

At the time Christ entered the body of Jesus, the latter was a disciple of high degree, consequently his life spirit was well organized. Therefore, the lowest vehicle in which Christ functioned, and the best organized vehicle in which Jesus functioned, were identical; Christ, when He took the vital body and the dense body of Jesus, was thus furnished with a complete chain of vehicles bridging the gap between the World of Life Spirit and the dense Physical World.

We are given other information about the Incarnation Mystery in this section and other parts of *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* (and in other relevant writings of Mr. Heindel, some of which will be mentioned), but nowhere are we told precisely what happened. Provocatively exploring the controversial possibilities of exactly what happened and the various implications is one purpose of this article.

Controversy about the Incarnation Mystery is not new and it is not limited to Christians. Plotinus, the great Neoplatonist seer, who on several occasions awakened in the world of Life Spirit, did not believe that a continuous experience of the Life Spirit in the dense physical body was possible. On the other hand, at least one Hindu seer associated with Mme. Blavatsky stated that the first and only complete incarnation of Vishnu to date was that of Jesus—different terms but the same meaning. Within Christendom the representatives of the

Children of Seth in the Roman Church have treated the controversy in a typical Waterling way. To think that the nature of Jesus during the three years’ ministry was singular—either completely divine or completely human—became known as the Monophysite Heresy. To think that the nature of Jesus was dual—part divine and part human in perfect harmony—was called the Nestorian Heresy. This writer does not know if there is a heresy to cover the nature of Jesus being multiple, but would not be surprised if there were. Anyway, if it is heretical to think that the nature of Jesus is either singular or plural, there is no longer any controversy—there never is if you can’t think anything and only blindly believe a dogma and its Mysteries without question.

If we study the Gospels, we realize that something profound occurred at the baptism by John. In at least one of the Gospels Jesus even refers to the validity of the baptism by John to confound the Pharisees. The Incarnation, as we wish to examine it, is best described in John’s Gospel:

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but that one that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he that which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God.

From Luke’s Gospel we learn that John, the Baptizer, was a cousin of Jesus and that he recognized him from within the womb. Something profound must have happened for John to suddenly “know him not” when he knew him from the womb and recognized him moments before the baptism. Some Rosicrucian students would note that this is evidence of the teaching stated on page 378 of *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* that Jesus had

many previous rebirths but that Christ had none before and was, therefore, a stranger to earthly humans like John. Although that certainly seems to be true, we should not allow ourselves to be satisfied with that answer, thus becoming complacent, thereby perhaps missing a more profound truth, like the sleeping disciples of Gethsemane.

Discovering a more profound meaning of the baptism by John—the Incarnation Mystery—is not easy to do; neither is finding out exactly what happened during that event without well-trained seership. All of the potential, simple answers known to this writer are philosophically painful (pain is the nature of the Incarnation), all seem to have something objectionable about them. One would almost be left feeling like a Waterling—compelled by fear of excommunication to believe in the Incarnation Mystery without thinking, if not for the burning curiosity drawing one to the Mysteries like a moth to a candle. So, let's review the arguments anyway, objectionable though they may be.

One of the theses put forth to solve the Incarnation Mystery is that at the baptism the personality of Jesus was “overshadowed” and interpenetrated inductively by Christ. This thesis is usually advanced by nonChristian mystics or by those who do not like to face hard issues like pain and suffering. It is objectionable for the same reason that the proposition that Jesus did not die on the cross is not a viable answer to the Crucifixion Mystery—if true, they would defeat the whole purpose of the Incarnation and the Crucifixion: to bring divine grace and salvation directly into our sphere through a being that had experienced this world and the sinful human condition. It would make the Incarnation and Crucifixion a sham. We are not saved by an inductive association with Christ but by a direct, living, internal bond with Christ who knows us and lives in us as we live in Christ. The Rosicrucian philosophy, based on carefully corroborated, trained seership, would seem to reject this thesis outright because it is not based on observed facts—facts such as the dense physical and vital



Die Bibel in Bildern, Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld (1789-1853)

Christ Casting Out Two Devils

Spirit possession was more common in the time of Christ Jesus because the etheric body was more loosely bound to the dense physical body, the Ego was not as individualized, and the consciousness was not as positively disposed.

bodies of Jesus being directly used by Christ, the still-preserved vital body of Jesus, the consequent change of the vital body of the earth from within, and so on.

The thesis that there was a voluntary exchange of the dense physical and vital bodies from Jesus to Christ is more complicated and more engaging. It is objectionable on ethical grounds even though it appears to be what *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* is saying. According to this thesis, if the transference of control of vehicles was partial, it would be an act of mediumship. It is painfully difficult for this writer to conceive that all of Christianity and the religion of freedom and the future, the religion of the Son, is based on mediumship. The voluntary surrender of Jesus would not free that act from the charge of mediumship. Most mediums voluntarily, partially surrender their vehicles and that volition does not absolve either party from culpability for violation of vehicles that are a temple of tailor-made, private emanations of the spirit within. It would have been pure hypocrisy and an internal contradiction for Christ-Jesus, who cast out a legion of demons possessing a man and defended the act by saying “How can Satan cast out

Satan?”, to have been guilty of the same act. If true, this thesis would mean that Jesus, being a practicing medium, could not affiliate with the Rosicrucian Fellowship, which denies membership to practicing mediums—ironic in that the Rosicrucian Order and the Rosicrucian Fellowship were supposedly founded with the approval of Christ and Jesus. According to this thesis, if the transference of control of the lower vehicles of Jesus was complete, it would mean that the three years ministry was a matter of spirit possession, an activity that is even more ethically objectionable and even offensive. Some highly sophisticated Christian mystical writers aver that there were two Jesus children and that at the death of one a composite combination of bodies was formed to be able to withstand the disintegrating effects of the higher vibrations of Christ on the integrity of the lower vehicles—the dense physical body of Jesus, according to Max Heindel, did in fact disintegrate in three days, but no mention is made of how the vital body was and is preserved without disintegration. Even if we grant this thesis, which compounds the ethical objections mentioned above, it does not avoid the issue of mediumship or possession.

Some have hypothesized that the transference of the dense physical and vital bodies of Jesus occurred at the exact moment before, or exactly at what would have been the death of Jesus. Beyond the pedantic technical problems of the breaking of the silver cord and the loosening of the seed atoms, there are also grave ethical and philosophical problems with this thesis. If true, it would mean that Christianity and the religion of the Son were inaugurated through a suicide by Jesus, a drowning murder by John (and we would call him John the Drowner, instead of John the Baptizer), or by an accidental drowning of Jesus.

Some individuals with the kind of powerful intellect that silences intuition have averred that even the death on the cross was a suicide, because the phrase “he gave up the ghost” (which is perhaps the only phrase common to all four Gospels) implies that he gave up rather than die of natural causes or be finished off by the spear—but to conceive that the Incarnation was part of a suicide is ludicrous if not downright disgusting, given the pro-life stance of the teaching of Christ-Jesus and his acceptance

of his own death of which he was continuously aware during the ministry. The death hypothesis is not as simplistic as it seems at first because of the attendant philosophical notions that might be implied in it (with the crucifixion it would mean two deaths—an occurrence not entirely outrageous in a “twice born” religion whose founder warns of a second death). Though engaging, informative and enriching, those philosophical speculations are extraneous to the factual matter of the Incarnation taking place through an intentional drowning. An intentional drowning has to be outrageously preposterous and, given all of the prophecies and preparations for the Incarnation and the promise of certain redemption in Christ, the accident hypothesis suffers from fatal internal contradictions.

On the surface, there do not appear to be any unmitigatedly good answers to the issues of the Incarnation Mystery that are consistent with the high ethical ideals of Christ and the Mysteries. We are apparently as stymied as the Children of Water with regard to the Incarnation Mystery, except that we have the burning desire to solve it! There must be an answer and it is probably deeper or more subtle than what is suggested in this essay. Perhaps we don’t have enough information. Perhaps this writer misunderstands the information. Perhaps most of us misunderstand and have not taken the time to think it out and come to an intuitive solution that is both logically and ethically sound.

There is a reason for this questioning, provocative, and even inflammatory presentation of the issue. This article is intended as an invitation as much as a statement or provocation. This writer would love to know what other students think, feel, and intuit about this issue, whether it be profound and ponderous or simple and sincere. Perhaps there is a trained clairvoyant or a Christian Initiate among us that can clarify the matter definitively. Perhaps someone just has a true feeling about it. This writer is not seeking a final, dogmatic, official Rosicrucian answer, but more of a sharing in the “fellowship of the spirit,” a breaking and sharing of the bread of Christ. He may also be moved to proffer his personal thoughts on the Incarnation, since he has not done so here. □

—Dexter Christianson